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duties for each other, but this form of social grouping does not seem to affect the political organization at all at the present day.[1]

Within the clan, smaller lineage groups are recognized. These have no distinct name; though the Bemba often refer to them as 'houses' (*amaianda*, sing. *iyanda*) of the same clan. Such a house consists of the direct descendants of one particular ancestress traced back to three or four generations—five at the most. Within this smaller descent group, succession to office is usually limited, and chieftainships tend to become hereditary within three or four generations in such lines.[2] Social replacement of one man for another, either as an heir, an officiant in a religious ceremony, in fulfilment of a marriage contract (in the case of a woman), or in compensation for blood guilt in the old days, tends and tended to take place within the 'house' and not the clan, though members of the *umukoa* do replace each other if there is no one more nearly related within the *iyanda* to do so.

It is the smaller descent-group which is important in considering the influence of the ancestral spirits (*imipashi*, sing. *umupashi*) over the living, either as affecting the welfare of their descendants in general or as entering the wombs of pregnant women of that descent-group to act as guardian spirits to the children as yet unborn.

Apart from the descent-group that determines his status, there is the body of kinsmen with whom a Bemba co-operates actively in daily life. These are the people with whom he may choose to live, and who gather together at any important event in his life, such as marriage, the birth of a child, illness, or a death. This group is known by a distinct term, the *ulupwa*. It has a bilateral basis, since it is composed of the near relatives on both sides of the family and also relatives in law. The balance between the powers of the maternal and paternal relatives is a very even one in Bemba society, in spite of the legal emphasis on the matrilineal side, and the ties uniting the members of the *ulupwa* are very strong.[3] Though it is

[1] cf. my 'Reciprocal Clan Relationships among the Bemba of North-Eastern Rhodesia', *Man*, December, 1937.

[2] The late Nkula, Bwalya Cangala, claimed, in the course of a succession dispute, that his near relatives, the children of his grandmother, Nakaasfye, must now be considered as a separate 'house', as distinct from the children and grandchildren of her sister, Mukukamfumu II (cf. chart on p. 102).

[3] cf. my 'Mother-right in Central Africa' in *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman* (1934).

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more usual to live with kinsmen on the matrilineal side, the grandfather or the mother's brother, yet a man may choose to live with his father's people by preference, and they play an important part at all the great ceremonial occasions in his life. The strength of the bilateral *ulupwa* is in fact one of the distinguishing features of the Bemba kinship system as compared with the strongly patrilineal societies of South Africa to my mind. It affects the political system in two ways. First, it allows for a much greater variety in the composition of the village, and more possibilities of change in its membership; and, secondly, we find in the case of the chief's relatives that the *ulupwa* of a ruler is an important unit in the whole political machine. A ruler's sons receive positions and office as well as his heirs, the maternal nephews; and his father's relatives and those related to him by marriage are also favoured, so that his grip over the country is a strong one.

(2) *Local Grouping*. The local unit in Bemba society is the village (*umushi*, plur. *imishi*). It contains on an average thirty to fifty huts, and is a kinship unit first and foremost. A village comes into being when a middle-aged or elderly man has acquired a big enough following of relatives to justify his applying to the chief for permission to set up a community on his own. He usually builds near other relatives, but land is so plentiful that it is perfectly possible for him to settle almost where he pleases within the chief's domain. The core of the village consists in the first place of the headman's own matrilocal family group, i.e. his married daughters with their husbands and children, and probably members of his matrilineal descent-group, i.e. his sisters and their children. Polygamy is rare. A chief will have a number of wives, say ten to fifteen, but commoners do not often have more than one.

A successful headman will be able to attract more distant relatives to him, both on the patrilineal and matrilineal side. On his death he may be succeeded by his heir, and such a local community may continue in existence with frequent changes in its composition, for two, three, or even more generations. Indeed, the village of the hereditary officials of the paramount chief (*bakabilo*, cf. pp. 100, 108) remain permanently fixed in one village. Thus in every district there are a number of new villages brought into existence by the chief's favour (*ukupokelafye kuli mfumu*) and therefore specially dependent on his support. These include communities newly gathered together by commoner headmen, as

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554 565 royal princesses are also entitled to honour, as well as those of wives of chiefs and even consorts of princesses. It will be seen, therefore, that the royal rank is a very large one. Any one who can possibly claim connexion of any sort with any chief, dead or living, does so, although the perquisites of rank are in most cases honour only and the possible favours of the chief, rather than any material assets. Every one outside the royal clan, or *ulupwa*, is an *umupabi*, or 'ordinary person', and in old days there was a slave class below—men and women captured in battle or enslaved to their own people for some crime. These individuals were known [578 567] as *bashya*. The term is now used as an opprobrious epithet especially for foreigners—often assumed to have been enslaved by the Bemba formerly. Slavery itself no longer exists.

561 (4) *Other Principles of Social Grouping*. Age is not a principle of social grouping among the Bemba. Precedence is reckoned on the basis of seniority, as in most Bantu societies, and there are special terms used to describe the different stages of life, suckling, infant, child, adolescent, unmarried, married, old, &c. But there [881] are no regiments based on age, as in South and parts of East Africa, and the boys initiation ceremonies so often found associated with such institutions do not exist among this group of the Central Bantu.

● 571 There are no occupational groups, with the exception of certain specialist fishing communities on the banks of the big rivers, and in the old days there were specialist hunters of big game. Secret societies, such as the *ubutwa*, which is common among neighbouring tribes over the Congo border, and has been adopted by the Bisa of the swamps, do not seem to have been introduced among the Bemba.

105 To conclude, Bemba society is as yet undifferentiated to any large extent. The tribe is an outgrowth of a lineage-group which has occupied its present territory for 200 to 300 years, and has remained more or less homogeneous. The original kinship structure is still apparent. All the social groups to which a man belongs are ultimately based on kinship—whether it is his household village or descent group, and there are no other forms of association such as age-sets to cut across this original grouping by descent. Rank consists of membership of the clan of the first immigrants to enter the land.

(*c*) *Economic Background*. The Bemba are an agricultural people